

Message Text

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E.O. 11652: NA
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SUBJECT: EGYPTIAN INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY: DIALOGUE ON CODE OF ETHICS BEGINS; CIVIL LIBERTIES AND DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES REMAIN IMPORTANT. HAYKAL INTERROGATION CONTINUES BUT AHRAH'S FORMER CHAIRMAN NOT WORRIED. PRESS REACTS ANGRILY TO CRITICISM FROM IRAQIS AND SYRIANS. POSSIBILITY OF NEW POLITICAL PARTY MOOTED. END SUMMARY.

1. DEMOCRATIC DIALOGUE. CABINET MET JUNE 21 TO CONSIDER SADAT'S PREVIOUS DAY SPEECH IN WHICH PRESIDENT CALLED FOR NATIONAL DEBATE ON CODE OF ETHICS. FOLLOWING MEETING, PM SALEM CLAIMED RECENT DEVELOPMENTS EMPHASIZE "IMPORTANCE OF CIVIL LIBERTIES" AND SAID HIS GOVERNMENT "ENTHUSIASTIC" ON DEMOCRATIC PRACTICES AND FREE SPEECH. ACCORDING PRESS, UNIVERSITY RECTORS WILL MEET JUNE 22, ON SAME SUBJECT, TAKING THEIR LEAD FROM BOOKLET RECENTLY
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2. INVESTIGATIONS GO ON. IN TANDEM WITH ABOVE, SOCIALIST PROSECUTOR CONTINUING INTERROGATE DISSIDENT WRITERS, CONCENTRATING EXCLUSIVELY FOR PRESENT ON FORMER AHRAH CHAIRMAN MOHAMED HAYKAL. HAYKAL QUESTIONED JUNE 21 FOR TWO HOURS. FROM JOURNALISTS CLOSE TO HAYKAL,

WE UNDERSTAND INTERROGATION CONTINUES UNFOCUSED. SOCIALIST PROSECUTOR HAS ATTEMPTED FORCE HAYKAL ACCEPT VARIETY OF QUASI-DEROGATORY POLITICAL LABELS (NASSERIST, LEFTIST, PRO-COMMUNIST, ETC.), REPORTEDLY WITHOUT SUCCESS. ACCORDING OUR SOURCE, HAYKAL'S WRITINGS STILL HAVE NOT BEEN EXAMINED IN DETAIL. HAYKAL, REPORTEDLY, NOT WORRIED BY COURSE OF INVESTIGATION.

3. ARAB WRITERS. PRESS REACTED ANGRILY TO REPORTED BEIRUT MEETING OF ARAB JOURNALISTS, CHAIRED BY IRAQI MINISTER OF INFORMATION, WHICH CONDEMNED RECENT EGYPTIAN INTERNAL DEVELOPMENTS. AHRAH NOTED IRONY OF IRAQ, WHICH HAS JUST EXECUTED 20 COMMUNISTS, AND SYRIA, WHICH LIQUIDATES ITS JOURNALISTIC OPPONENTS, COMMENTING ON LIBERTY AND DEMOCRACY IN EGYPT.

4. NEW PARTY? JUNE 22 MUSAWWAR SUGGESTED PRE-REVOLUTIONARY NATIONALIST PARTY WILL BE RESURRECTED IN COMING DAYS. PICTURE OF PROPOSED FOUNDING MEMBERS PRINTED; MOST ARE FORMER POLITICIANS BUT NONE WERE PARTICULARLY PROMINENT. EVEN BEFORE RECENT CRACKDOWN, FORMER NATIONALISTS WERE RUMORED TO BE ORGANIZING. SADAT'S EXEMPTION OF MEMBERS THIS PARTY (AND SOCIALISTS) FROM CORRUPT CATEGORY IN RECENT SPEECHES LIKELY BE READ AS GIVING GREEN LIGHT. PROBLEM IS, NATIONALISTS DO NOT HAVE 20 MEMBERS IN PARLIAMENT. THEY HAVE ASKED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO BE EXEMPTED FROM THIS CLAUSE ON GROUND SADAT FAVORS THEIR RESURRECTION. UNCLEAR WHETHER THIS CAN BE DONE LEGALLY. HOWEVER, THERE IS CONSIDERABLE SPECULATION THAT GOVERNMENT FEELS CREATION OF NEW PARTY WOULD DO MUCH TO REFURBISH ITS DEMOCRATIC IMAGE. EILTS

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